

## **Grade 8 - Informational**

### **Louise Pound 1872–1958**

Louise Pound was a competitor throughout her life. She would not let the views of many Americans stand in the way of achieving her goals. Her determination became an inspiration to other women in the areas of sports, education, and professional advancement.

#### **Early Years**

Pound was born June 30, 1872, in Lincoln, Nebraska. Her father, Stephen Pound, was an attorney and became a district judge later in life. Her mother, Laura Pound, taught Louise and her siblings, Roscoe and Olivia, at home until they were old enough to attend the University of Nebraska preparatory school.

While attending school, Pound began to change the traditional misconceptions about female roles. She competed in a variety of sports and received an advanced degree, which was not typical for a woman at that time.

#### **Athletically Talented**

Pound was a strong competitor in sports. She was an outstanding athlete who made notable achievements in several sports, often competing against men. She became the Lincoln City Tennis Champion in 1890. She competed against men for the University of Nebraska tennis title in 1891 and 1892 and won in both years. In 1900, she played a tie match with the Olympic men's singles tennis titleholder.

Pound excelled in a variety of sports besides tennis, and she encouraged other women to participate in them. She received a 100-mile cycling medal in 1906 and won a state golf championship in 1916. Later, she would introduce cross-country skiing to the community of Lincoln and manage the university women's basketball team.

In 1955, Pound received the honor of being the first woman to be inducted into the University of Nebraska Sports Hall of Fame.

#### **Academics a Priority**

Pound was a strong supporter for educational and professional advancement of women. When she arrived at the University of Nebraska (UNL), she was determined to have faculty and students perceive her as a true scholar rather than as Dean Roscoe Pound's younger sister. She succeeded and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1892 and a Master of Arts degree in 1895.

Pound continued her education in Heidelberg, Germany, where she completed an advanced degree in two semesters rather than the usual seven semesters. She was

the first female graduate of the UNL to earn an advanced degree with honors.

Pound returned to the UNL, where she was hired to teach American Literature, Contemporary English, and Comparative Literature. She continued to teach at the UNL until she retired in 1945.

### Professional Achievements

Pound was a lecturer, author, and editor of books and magazines on many topics including literature, education, and Nebraska and American folklore. She contributed to publications such as *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *American Speech Quarterly*, and *Southern Folklore Quarterly*.

Pound was active in several professional organizations. She was the first woman president of the Modern Language Association of America. She was an active member in both the National Council of English Teachers and the Folklore Society of America.

During World War I, Pound was a member of several organizations that helped the war effort in the states. She was a staff member on the Women's Committee of the State Council of Defense and was acting state head of the National League for Women's Services in 1918. She was chairperson of Overseas Relief Activities and a member of the Food for France Committee.

Pound died June 27, 1958. She made a lasting impact in Nebraska as a pioneer in women's sports and American culture and language.

### Timeline of Events in Louise Pound's Life

